

Series: AWM95
Australian Army commanders' diaries
[Vietnam]

Army Aviation units

Item number: 8/1/58

Item: 161 [Independent]

Reconnaissance Flight

Narrative

[1-30 Jun 1971]

COVERING LETTER

Reference No 238

To: OIC, Military History Section, AHQ.

1. I enclose Commanders Diary (AF C 2118) (Adapted) as indicated at Part 2.

2. Please return receipt below.

(Signature)

Appointment OC 161 (Indep) Recce Flt
(OC Unit or senior staff officer)

SECRET

ORIGINAL

DUPLICATE

Strike out where
not applicable

COMMANDERS DIARY

OF

Unit or Formation 161 (Indep) Recce Flt

From 1 June 71

To 30 June 71

INDEX

Narrative (AF C 2118)

ANNEXES

- * A Duty officer's log
- * B Messages connected with log
- C Operation orders and instructions issued
- D Operation orders and instructions received
- * E Sitreps issued
- F Orders of battle and location reports issued
- G Intelligence reports and summaries issued; appreciations made
- H Administrative orders and instructions issued
- I Administrative orders and instructions received
- J Administrative reports and bulletins; ammunition returns; field strength returns
- * K Standing orders issued
- L Commander's policy and demi-official letters
- M Action reports (if required)
- N Other papers, eg, maps and diagrams, air photos, reports from sub units
- O Periodical summaries of operations
- Z Top Secret Supplementary Diary

* Only to be included during operations.
† Cross out whichever is not applicable.

Enclosure Numbers

- to
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† NIL
† RETAINED
† Despatched to

on

PART 3

COMMANDERS DIARIES

INSTRUCTIONS

AIM

1. The aim of a Commanders Diary is to provide data on which to base future improvements in Army training, equipment, organization and administration, and to furnish historians with a record of the activities of units and formations in operational and non-operational periods in peace and in war.

GENERAL

2. Entries are to be made daily on AF C 2118 (Adapted) each entry being initialled by the officer detailed to keep it.
3. Commanders Diaries will conform with the rules for drafting orders given in "Staff Duties (Australia)", Chapter 2, Section 12.

RESPONSIBILITY

During Non-operational Periods

4. A Commanders Diary is to be compiled by commanders of all formations.

During Operational Periods (1)

5. A Commanders Diary is to be compiled in duplicate by:
 - a. Commanders of all formations.
 - b. Each branch of the staff at formation headquarters commanded by a brigadier or above.
 - c. Heads of services not below the rank of lieutenant colonel.
 - d. Personal staffs and officers holding special appointments.
 - e. Unit commanders.
 - f. Commanders of a detachment of a unit when so ordered.

COMPILATION

6. Both original and duplicate copies are to consist of:
 - a. Cover (AF C 2119) (Adapted).
 - b. Index as printed on cover.
 - c. Narrative (AF C 2118) (Adapted).
 - d. Annexes as shown in the Index.
7. All details of the unit or formation (if a detachment is concerned, the name of the parent unit), period covered and enclosure numbers of the annexes are to be shown on the cover. If there has been a change of command since the last report, the date of assumption by the new commanding officer is to be included.
8. The annexes are to be assembled in the groups shown on the cover. If there are no enclosures for an annex NIL will be entered on the cover. If additional annexes are convenient for a particular headquarters, the relevant annexes should be grouped as starting at B.

g for operations form Annex "Z", "TOP SECRET", the document. It is to be prepared and disposed of as

CONTENTS

ies as well as map references), establishment, equipment and orders given. the day's fighting, including company movements. mmander with regard to equipment, tactics, organization

potential importance.

to officers, men and equipment.

ipment captured.

employed in the time not accounted for. The type of

s and to save work as much information as possible is to documents issued and received, routine returns, etc. All d and the time of receipt or despatch is to be given.

the annexes, but need not give a precis of any of them.

(continued on back cover)

DISPOSAL

13. **Original Commander's Diary.** This is to be forwarded monthly, unless otherwise ordered, by the seventh day of the succeeding month direct to AHQ.
14. **Duplicate Commander's Diary.** This must be clearly marked as a duplicate. It is to be sent separately from the original to AHQ one month after the original has been despatched but not before the former has been acknowledged.
15. When overseas, both copies of diaries are to be sent through the Army Records organization in the overseas theatre but at different times.
16. **TOP SECRET Supplementary Diaries.**
- a. The documents referred to in Paragraph 9 together with a list of them made out on AF C 2118 (Adapted) must be placed in separate cover (AF C 2119) (Adapted). All details must be filled in and the cover clearly marked in red: "ANNEX Z — OFFICER ONLY". It may be convenient to group the papers by appendices.
 - b. Supplementary diaries must be forwarded under the normal rules for TOP SECRET correspondence, to AHQ. The inner envelope must be plainly marked:

TOP SECRET

ANNEX Z to

Commanders Diary of 161 (Indep) Recce Flt (Formation or Unit)

From 1 June 71 to 30 June 71 (Dates)

- c. The duplicate supplementary diaries must be despatched as shown in Paragraph 14 as soon as receipt of the original has been acknowledged.

This form is to be enclosed with the annexes in AF-C2119 (Adapted)

AUSTRALIAN MILITARY FORCES

AF - C2118 (Adapted)
Revised Apr 69

COMMANDER'S DIARY NARRATIVE

UNIT/FORMATION 161 (Indep) Recce Flt

MONTH and YEAR June 71

REFERENCE MAP PHOUC TUY PROVINCE

COMMANDING OFFICER Maj N.H. Harden

Serial	Place and Grid reference	Date	Time	Event or Information	Reference to annex letter and or enclosure No
(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)	(e)	(f)
				<u>SUMMARY</u>	
				This month, major interest was centered round 1 ATF's "Operation Overlord" which began 5 June 71. A total of 365 hours were flown by the flight in support of the operation and all tasks allocated to the flight were completed. There was as a result, an increase in the number and variety of tasks such as, command and control, radio relay, map spotting, and air OP.	
				At the completion of "Overlord, 4 RAR continued follow up operations against 1 BN 274 Regt and SR4 providing the flight with increases in visual reconnaissance and Air strike missions towards the end of the month.	
				The runway at Luscombe Airfield is causing some concern and is due to be resurfaced. There have been several delays and the commencement date has now been extended into next month.	
				A break up of sorties and hours flown is attached as Annex A.	

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AUSTRALIAN MILITARY FORCES

COMMANDER'S DIARY NARRATIVE

AF - C2118 (Adapted)
Revised Apr 69

UNIT/FORMATION 161 (Indep) Recce Flt

MONTH and YEAR June 71

REFERENCE MAP PHOUC TUY PROVINCE

COMMANDING OFFICER Major N.H. Harden

Serial	Place and Grid reference	Date	Time	Event or Information	Reference to annex letter and or enclosure No (f)
(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)	(e)	
		1 Jun 71		VR's Reported nothing of significance.	
		2 Jun 71	1600	2Lt Pearson reported tracks running from 416866 to 417861 which appeared to be about 7 days old.	
		3 Jun 71	1500	VR's reported nothing of significance.	
		4 Jun 71	1500	At 410900 2Lt Hayes found two bamboo tables in a recently cleared sleeping space.	
		4 Jun 71	0900	Capt Monteith followed a track 24 to 48 hours old leading from 345785 to 364799.	
		5 Jun 71		VR's reported nothing of significance.	
		6 Jun 71	1500	2Lt Pearson discovered a lie up position with an aerial between the trees, used in last 1 to 2 week days.	
		7 Jun 71		VR's reported nothing of significance.	
		8 Jun 71	1100	Fresh track reported by Lt Mackworth, less than 24 hours old running from 496968 to 490957 to 487954.	
		8 Jun 71	2200	Lt Mc Ghie and Lt Howard carried out flare dropping mission over 4 RAR who had movement on their perimeter.	

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AUSTRALIAN MILITARY FORCES

AF - C2118 (Adapted)
Revised Apr 69

COMMANDER'S DIARY NARRATIVE

UNIT/FORMATION 161 (Indep) Recce Flt

MONTH and YEAR June 71

REFERENCE MAP PHOUC TUY PROVINCE

COMMANDING OFFICER Major N.H. Harden

Serial	Place and Grid reference	Date	Time	Event or Information	Reference to annex letter and or enclosure No (f)
(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)	(e)	
		9 Jun 71		VR's reported nothing of significance.	
		10 Jun 71	1300	2Lt Pearson sighted a boat at 627923 which was engaged by JADE FACS boat slightly damaged.	
		11 Jun 71		VR's reported nothing of significance.	
		12 Jun 71		VR's reported nothing of significance.	
		13 Jun 71	1100	2Lt Gibson marked for an airstrike onto 3 bunkers, 1 table and a fighting pit BDA NIL.	
		14 Jun 71		VR's reported nothing of significance.	
		15 Jun 71	0900	2Lt Hayes found tracks of Elephants made 1 to 2 days previously. They were followed from 727769 to 72957615.	
		16 Jun 71	1300	2Lt Gibson sighted fresh track leading to old bunker at 554706.	
		16 Jun 71		Major Harden and Lt Mc Ghie carried out a mission for AATTV up to the north as far as PLEIKU.	
		17 Jun 71	1100	Lt Steel found a fishing net at 591588 streched across the mouth of the Song Rai.	

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AUSTRALIAN MILITARY FORCES

AF - C2118 (Adapted)
Revised Apr 69

COMMANDER'S DIARY NARRATIVE

UNIT/FORMATION 161 (Indep) Recce Flt

MONTH and YEAR June 71

REFERENCE MAP PHOUC TUY PROVINCE

COMMANDING OFFICER Major N.H. Harden

Serial	Place and Grid reference	Date	Time	Event or Information	Reference to annex letter and or enclosure No (f)
(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)	(e)	
		18 Jun 71	0900	2Lt Wright sighted approx 100 pigs at 680865 and 2 yellow trucks at 711809.	
		18 Jun 71	1600	2Lt Pearson sighted more Elephant tracks at 742773.	
		19 Jun 71	1300	2Lt Sonneveld sighted a track 1 to 2 days old across route 338 at old FSB TASMAN. Old rubbish pits dug up in area.	
		19 Jun 71		The Deputy Commander and his staff made an inspection of the unit in all A and Q matters and the inspection was very satisfactory.	
		20 Jun 71		VR's reported nothing of significance.	
		21 Jun 71	0930	Capt Monteith reported a fish trap built across a creek at 667867. There was a rest area to one side. The area was engaged with rockets but with no results.	
		22 Jun 71	2400	Lt Dawson and Lt Sinnott carried out flare dropping missions over A Sqn 3 Cav who had sprung an ambush and required light for the sweep through in order to collect bodies, result 12 enemy KIA.	
		22 Jun 71		VR's reported nothing of significance.	
		23 Jun 71		Capt Cairns returned to Australia on completion of his tour and Lt Reynolds arrived to take up the position of RW Section Commander.	

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AUSTRALIAN MILITARY FORCES

AF - C2118 (Adapted)
Revised Apr 69

COMMANDER'S DIARY NARRATIVE

UNIT/FORMATION 161 (Indep) Recce Flt

MONTH and YEAR June 71

REFERENCE MAP PHOUC TUY PROVINCE

COMMANDING OFFICER Maj N.H. Harden

Serial	Place and Grid reference	Date	Time	Event or Information	Reference to annex letter and or enclosure No (f)
(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)	(e)	
		27 Jun 71		VR's reported nothing of significance.	
		28 Jun 71		Maj Harden and Lt Sonneweld departed for Vung Tau to complete a	
				conversion onto the OH58A Kiowa, with the 5th Aviation Det. The course	
				is planned to last one week and all other pilots will attend the course	
				at later dates.	
				Allied with this was the maintenance training programe which is scheduled	
				to last 4 weeks. the following personnel departed this day on the first	
				of these courses.	
				Capt Barlow, Sgt Lidster, WO2 Bell Sgt Watson, Cpl Lojkin, Cpl Dupree	
				LCpl Ross and Cfn Graham.	
		29 Jun 71	1130	Lt Steel reported a fresh track running E-W and used by 5 4 persons	
				at 490841.	
		30 Jun 71		VR's reported nothing of significance.	
		30 Jun 71		The unit Admin Officer Lt Gygar departed for Australia after completing	
				a 12 month tour with the unit.	

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AUSTRALIAN MILITARY FORCES

AF - C2118 (Adapted)
Revised Apr 69

COMMANDER'S DIARY NARRATIVE

UNIT/FORMATION 161 (Indep) Recce Flt

MONTH and YEAR June 71

REFERENCE MAP PHOUIC TUY PROVINCE

COMMANDING OFFICER Maj N.H. Harden

Serial	Place and Grid reference	Date	Time	Event or Information	Reference to annex letter and or enclosure No (f)
(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)	(e)	
	<u>ANNEX A</u>	PART 1		RW hours and sorties.	
				Hrs <u>Day</u> Sorties Hrs <u>Night</u> Sorties	
				Pilot Recce 264.10 144 4.10 4	
				Pax Recce 105.15 116 2.50 3	
				Liaison 327.25 386 6.10 7	
				Air Op 35.30 28 - -	
				Sniffer 23.45 17 - -	
				Resup 9.35 10 - -	
				Misc 3.25 5 2.35 1	
				Trg 8.35 7 4.10 7	
				Test 6.45 10 - -	
				Dust Off .45 2 - -	

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AUSTRALIAN MILITARY FORCES

COMMANDER'S DIARY NARRATIVE

AF - C2118 (Adapted)
Revised Apr 69

MONTH and YEAR **June 71**

REFERENCE MAP **PHOUIC TUY PROVINCE**

UNIT/FORMATION **161 (Indep) Recce Flt**

COMMANDING OFFICER **Maj N.H. Harden**

Serial	Place and Grid reference	Date	Time	Event or Information	Reference to annex letter and or enclosure No (f)
(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)	(e)	
	ANNEX A	PART 2		FW hours and sorties.	
				Hrs DAY Sorties Hrs NIGHT Sorties	
				Pilot Recce 74.35 58 - -	
				Pax Recce 7.50 13 - -	
				Liaison 82.30 166 .40 1	
				547 Sig Tp 181.05 100 .25 1	
				Psy Ops 12.00 13 .30 1	
				Misc 15.20 14 - -	
				Flare Drop 6.05 4 - -	
				Sniffer 20.45 15 - -	
				Trg 2.40 4 - -	
				Air Op 1.20 1 - -	
				Test 4.35 1 - -	